



Southeast Fishery Bulletin

National Marine Fisheries Service, Southeast Regional Office, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, Florida 33701

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Notice of Availability for Public Comments on an Amendment to Extend Gulf of Mexico Red Snapper Recreational Sector Separation Provisions *Comment Period Ends October 24, 2016*

NOAA Fisheries seeks public comment on an amendment that would extend the 2017 sunset provision by five years for the recreational red snapper sector separation regulation.

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Council) has submitted Amendment 45 to NOAA Fisheries for review, approval, and implementation. The Notice of Availability for public comment on this amendment published in the *Federal Register* on August 25, 2016.

Please Note: This bulletin only summarizes the proposed actions and their effects. NOAA Fisheries encourages constituents to access Amendment 45 for more information at http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable_fisheries/gulf_fisheries/reef_fish/2016/am45/index.html.

Purpose of the Amendment 45

If approved by NOAA Fisheries, Amendment 45 would extend the sector separation provisions for the recreational sector fishing for red snapper for an additional five years. This extension is needed to give the Council additional time to complete the development and implementation of actions to address charter vessel and headboat fishing.

History

The sector separation provisions were implemented in May 2016 through Amendment 40. Provisions included sub-quotas, annual catch targets, and accountability measures for the federal for-hire and private angling components of the recreational sector fishing for red snapper. The purpose of Amendment 40 was to increase flexibility in future management of the recreational sector fishing for red snapper and reduce the chance for recreational red snapper quota overruns. A sunset provision had these provisions ending December 31, 2017. For more information on Amendment 40, see http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable_fisheries/gulf_fisheries/reef_fish/2013/am40/index.html.

Current Proposed Management Measures

Amendment 45 would extend the sunset provision from the end of the 2017 fishing year (December 31, 2017) to the end of the 2022 fishing year (December 31, 2022).

How to Submit Comments

NOAA Fisheries must receive comments on this notice no later than October 24, 2016. We will address all comments specifically directed to Amendment 45 or the subsequent proposed rule in the final rule. You may obtain electronic copies of Amendment 45 from the NOAA Fisheries Web site:

http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable_fisheries/gulf_fisheries/reef_fish/2016/am45/index.html or the e-Rulemaking Portal: www.regulations.gov.

You may submit comments on this document, identified by NOAA-NMFS-2016-0089, by any of the following methods:

Electronic Submission: Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal. Go to <http://www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=NOAA-NMFS-2016-0089>, click the "Comment Now!" icon, complete the required fields, and enter or attach your comments.

Mail: Submit written comments to Peter Hood, NOAA Fisheries, Southeast Regional Office, Sustainable Fisheries Division, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, Florida 33701-5505.

Instructions: Comments sent by any other method, to any other address or individual, or received after the end of the comment period, may not be considered by NOAA Fisheries. All comments received are a part of the public record and will generally be posted for public viewing on www.regulations.gov without change. All personal identifying information (e.g., name, address, etc.), confidential business information, or otherwise sensitive information submitted voluntarily by the sender will be publicly accessible. NOAA Fisheries will accept anonymous comments (enter "N/A" in the required fields).

if you wish to remain anonymous).

NOAA Fisheries Southeast is pleased to announce the introduction of our **Text Message Alert Program**. The program will allow you to sign up to receive important fishery related alerts via text message. Text alerts you may receive include immediate fishery openings and closures, and any significant changes to fishing regulations that happen quickly.

How to opt-in

Sign up for related alerts for one or more of the following groups. Standard message & data rates may apply. You may opt-out at any time.

- **Gulf of Mexico Recreational Fisheries:** Text GULFRECFISH to 888777
- **Gulf of Mexico Commercial Fisheries:** Text GULFCOMMFISH to 888777
- **South Atlantic Recreational Fisheries:** Text SATLRECFISH to 888777
- **South Atlantic Commercial Fisheries:** Text SATLCOMMFISH to 888777
- **Caribbean Fisheries:** Text CARIBFISH to 888777